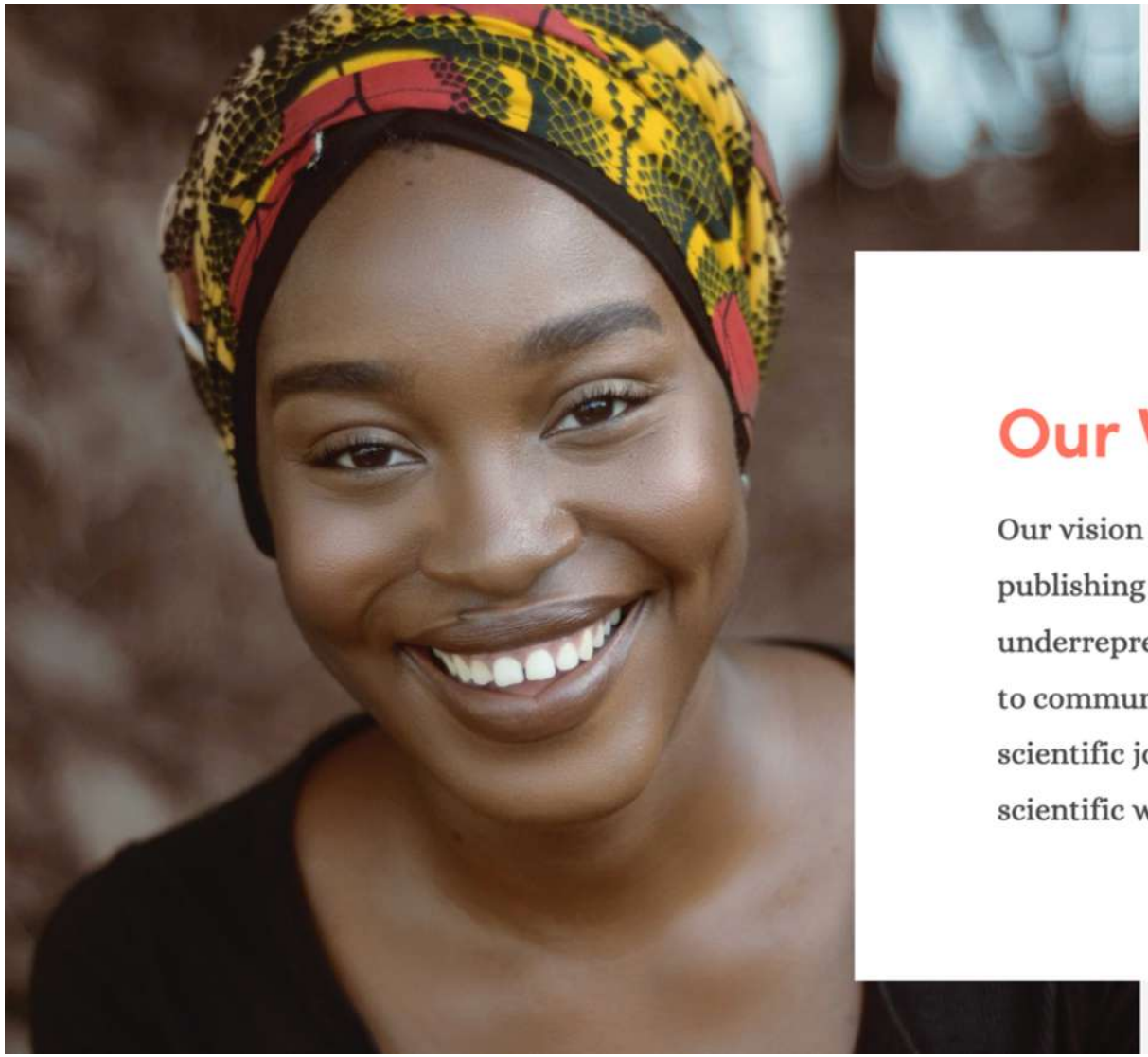
Rethé (Write)

Elaine Nsoesie, PhD
Assistant Professor of Global Health
Twitter: @ensoesie | Email: rethe.org@gmail.com
Website: www.rethe.org

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

We provide scientific writing tools and resources to student communities in Africa



Our Vision

Our vision is to increase diversity in scientific publishing by ensuring that students from underrepresented communities have the tools needed to communicate research findings and publish in scientific journals or conference proceedings. We offer scientific writing and storytelling workshops.

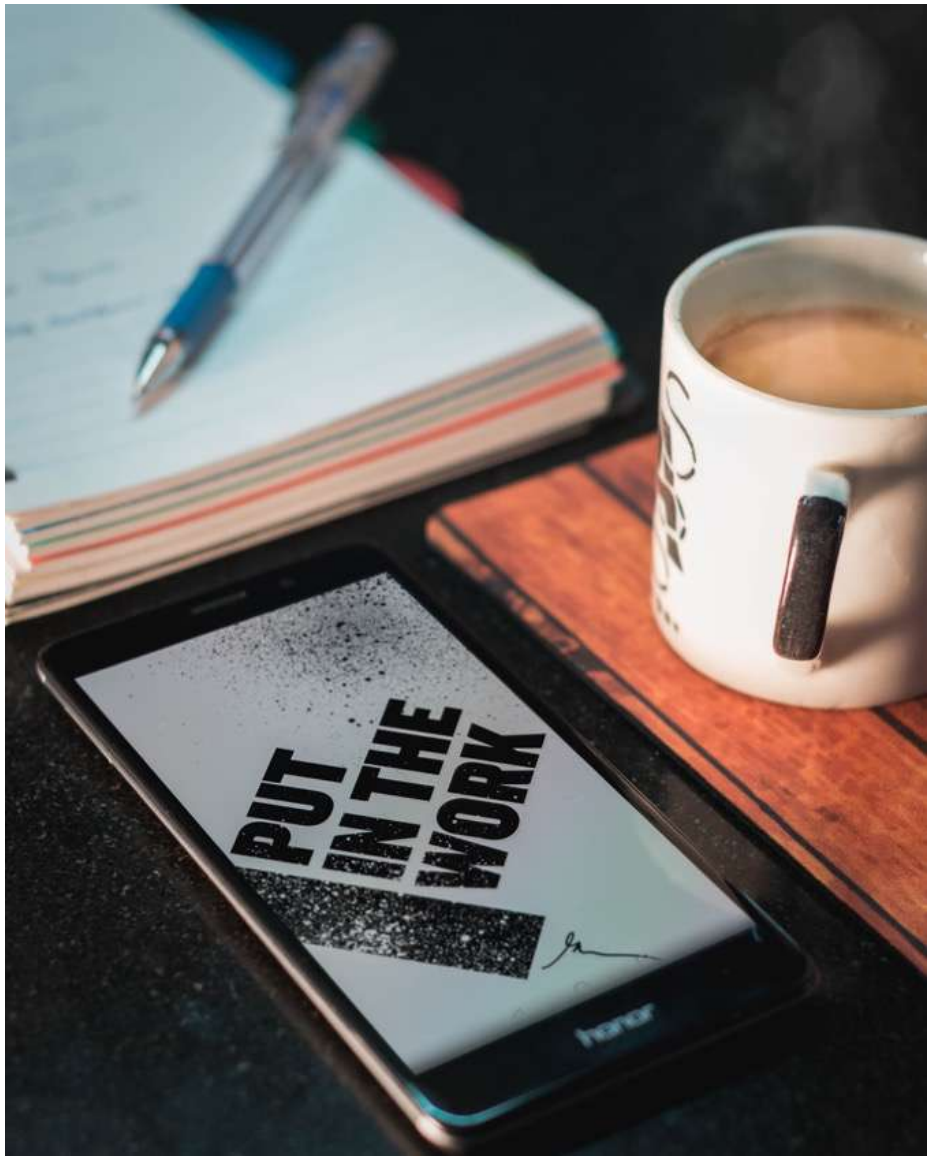
WORKSHOPS

- How to write and publish a scientific paper

- How to write for the public

WORKSHOP STRUCTURE

- Hands-on
    - You are expected to bring a writing project that you will work on during the course of the workshop
- Read and discuss sample papers
- We cover all the major parts of a scientific paper
    - Introduction, methods, results, discussion, conclusions



PROOFREADING

- We also provide proofreading services for journal articles, research papers, reports and more.
- We will review your work for grammar and spelling errors.

We won’t write your paper for you
but
we will help to make it publishable.

Send the final version of your paper to rethe.org@gmail.com

Our Impact

2

WORKSHOP HELD SO FAR

We held our first workshop in June, 2019 at The Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology (NM-AIST) in Arusha, Tanzania.

79

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

Our first workshop had 35 participants.

12

PAPERS EDITED

We have edited 12 manuscripts submitted by students and lecturers since we launched in June, 2019.

2020 GOALS

- Mentoring program
- Online writing community
- Writing workshops (invite us to your school)

Rethé (Write)

How to write well

You can become an excellent writer.

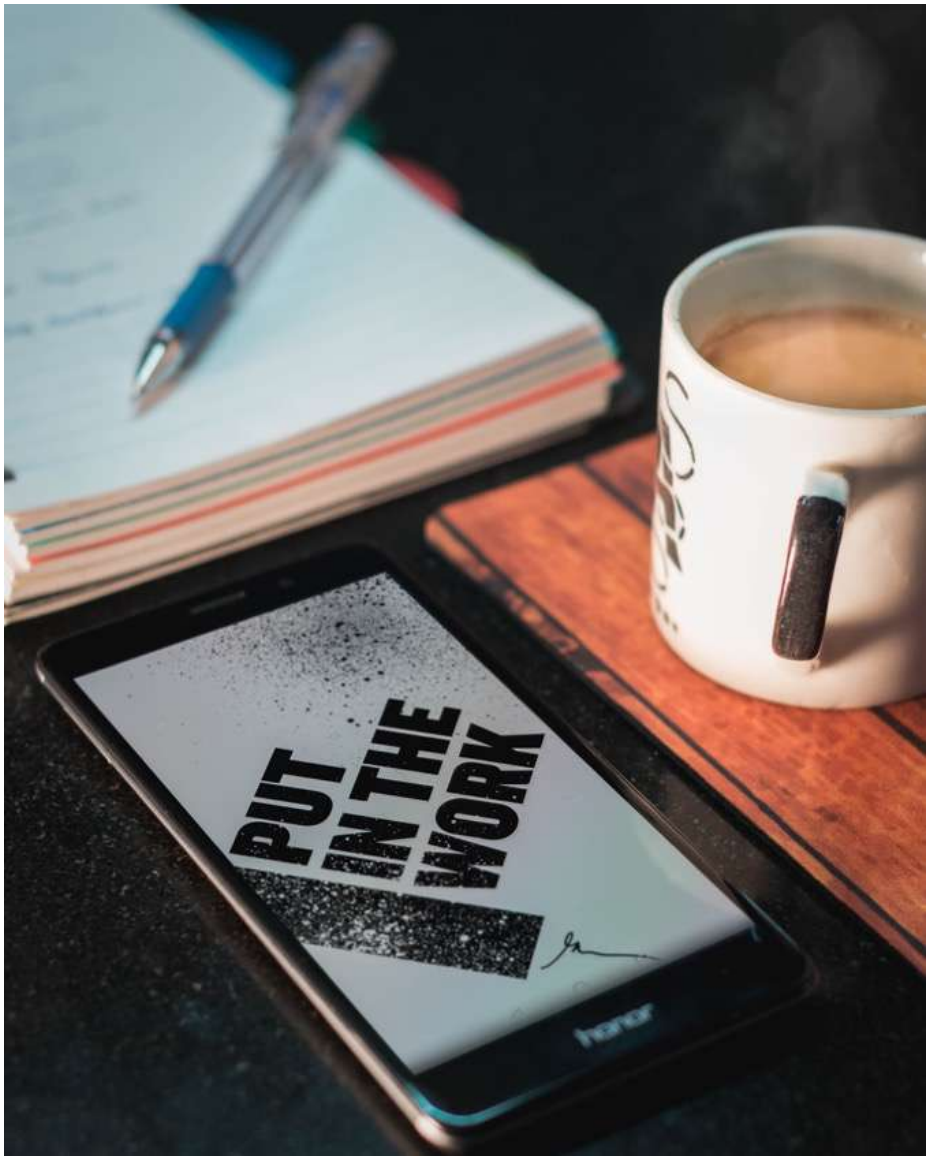
Rethé (Write)

Read extensively

- How many books have you read this year?
- How many research papers have you read this year?

Write regularly

- Don’t wait till your project is complete to write
- Write while working on your research
- Always aim to improve your writing



Don’t write alone

- Find peers and mentors who can help you write well
- Rethé writing community

Good scientific writing is ...

1. **Clear** - it avoids unnecessary detail.
2. **Simple** - it uses direct language, avoiding vague or complicated sentences. Technical terms and jargon are used only when they are necessary for accuracy.
3. **Impartial** - it avoids making assumptions (Everyone knows that ...) and unproven statements (It can never be proved that ...). It presents how and where data were collected and supports its conclusions with evidence.

Good scientific writing is ...

4. **Structured logically** - ideas and processes are expressed in a logical order. The text is divided into sections with clear headings.
5. **Accurate** - it avoids vague and ambiguous language such as about, approximately, or almost.
6. **Objective** - statements and ideas are supported by appropriate evidence that demonstrates how conclusions have been drawn as well as acknowledging the work of others.

Text from: https://cgi.duke.edu/web/sciwriting/index.php?action=lesson1

Writing the Introduction

"The purpose of the Introduction should be to supply sufficient background information to allow the reader to understand and evaluate the results of the present study without needing to refer to previous publications..." [2]

"The Introduction should also provide the rationale for the present study… you should state briefly and clearly your purpose in writing the paper." [2]

Simple Rules

1. Clearly stated the problem to be investigated
2. Review pertinent literature to orient the reader
3. State the major contribution of the paper and how it differs from previously published studies
4. State the major results (this depends on the journal)

Writing the Materials & Methods

"The purpose of the Materials and Methods section is to provide enough detail that a competent worker can repeat the experiments." [2]

Materials

- Include exact technical details including quantities and units of measurements
- Identify animals, plants and any organisms used in the study
- If human subjects were involved in the study, clearly describe the selection process, including informed consent
- Also include a statement on the Institutional Review Board approval of the study

Methods

1. Present methods chronologically
2. Use subheadings
3. Be precise (e.g., state the exact temperature used in heating a mixture)
4. State method of investigation and reason for selecting method, if necessary
5. Do not overstate ordinary statistical methods.
6. Add references and additional details for advanced or unusual statistical methods.

Writing the Results

State your findings clearly and succinctly.

Do not state methods in the Results section. List all methods in the Methods section.

Choose what you present. Because you conducted an experiment 100, does not mean you should present 100 numbers.

Simple Rules

1. Look at journal guidelines
2. Do not repeat information in Tables or Figures in the text
3. Results should be short and sweet
4. Use statistics to create summaries
5. The whole paper stands or falls on the basis of the results

Writing the Discussion

The Discussion is usually the hardest section to write because it is not clearly defined.

"Many, if not most, Discussions are too long and verbose." [2]

Simple Rules

1. Don’t be shy; discuss the significance of your work.
2. Discuss your findings. Do not reiterate the Results.
3. Point out exceptions in your findings.
4. Show how your results agree or disagree with previous findings.
5. Clearly state your conclusions and provide evidence to support each conclusion.

References

- Shebranek, I., Verne Meyer Patrick, and Dave Kemper. "Writers INC: A Student Handbook for Writing & Learning." (2001).
- Day, Robert A., and Barbara Gastel. *How to write and publish a scientific paper*. Cambridge University Press.
- https://cgi.duke.edu/web/sciwriting/index.php?action=lesson1

Contact Details

- www.rethe.org
- Email: rethe.org@gmail.com

- ensoesie.github.io
- Twitter: @ensoesie